

REMARKS

This amendment is offered in response to the Office Action of December 21, 2000.

It is respectfully submitted that this amendment will require neither a new search nor substantial reconsideration.

At the outset, the Applicant states that no new matter was added by the substitute specification filed in the previous amendment (dated June 16, 2000 and apparently received June 20, 2000) and requests that the Examiner enter this substitute specification and enter the amendatory language of said previous amendment. It is respectfully submitted that this resolves paragraphs 1-4 of the Office Action.

Additionally, the Applicant has amended Claims 25 and 27 to obviate the objection of paragraph 5 of the Office Action and the rejection of paragraph 6 of the Office Action, respectively.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 25, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by the Kanemitsu reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,400,568). Similarly, the Examiner rejected Claims 25-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over the Bodolay reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,776,045) in view of the Kanemitsu reference.

Claim 25 has been amended to clarify that the front wall includes a perforation and that the fastener assembly blocks any opening of the perforation when said engaging portion and said complementary engaging portion are engaged. It is respectfully submitted that this is not disclosed or suggested in the prior art.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the presently pending claims are patentable.

For all of the reasons above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are in immediate condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw her rejections of the claims, to enter this amendment, to allow the claims, and to pass this application to early issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX

Please amend Claims 25 and 27 as follows:

25. (amended) A method of manufacturing a reclosable bag having top and bottom ends and opposing front and rear walls and a flexible interlocking fastener assembly, said method comprising the steps of: sealing said fastener assembly to one or more lips; sealing one of said lips to one of said walls; said fastener assembly comprising an engaging portion and a flexible interlocking fastener assembly releasably connected to a complementary engaging portion, ^{with both the cep & fls sealed to said one or more lips} said complementary engaging portion ^{being} sealed to said front wall ^{1 walls said lip} only as a result of a sealing operation upstream from a forming and filling nozzle cylinder of a form, fill and seal machine, sealing an end of said front wall to said flexible interlocking fastener lip, ^(and to said back wall) and forming a perforation on said front wall intermediate said complementary engaging portion and said end sealed to said flexible interlocking fastener lip, whereby when said engaging portion is engaged to said complementary engaging portion, said fastener assembly blocks any opening of said perforation whereby a fail-safe reclosable bag barrier is formed reducing the risk of contamination or release of contents within or from an interior storage volume of said bag by inadvertent separation of

one portion of said front wall from another portion of said front wall.

27. (twice amended) The method of Claim 25 further comprising the step of securing predetermined sections of said fastener assembly having said [extended flange] flexible interlocking fastener lip to a continuous elongate sheet of said web material which forms said front and rear walls at bag length intervals along said continuous elongate sheet.